



## Home Inspection Services Newsletter

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November, 2007

### Educational Section: **Inspection Variability**

Why do inspection findings vary between inspectors? In addition to the obvious answer “**two different sets of eyes**”, the standards of professional practice for Arizona home inspectors allows for variability. Here are some of the standards:

**Roof:** Inspector is not required to walk on the roof (and many won't)

**Windows:** Only required to check one per room

**Electrical Receptacles:** Only required to check one per room

**Water Valves:** Not required to test any except toilet flush, hose bibs, & fixture faucets

**Low Voltage systems:** Not required to test yard lights, phone, CATV, Security, etc

**Smoke Detectors:** Inspectors are not required to observe

**Heat:** Not required to observe the uniformity or adequacy of heat supply to various rooms

**Household Appliances:** Inspector is not required to observe

**Air conditioners:** Not required to observe non-central air conditioners

**Cooling:** Not required to observe the uniformity or adequacy of cool-air supply to the various rooms

**Safety/Damage:** Inspector is not required to enter any area or perform any procedure which may damage the property or its components or be dangerous to the inspector or other persons

**Visual Inspection:** Inspector is not required to disturb insulation, move personal items, furniture, equipment, plant life, etc.

**Cosmetic:** Inspector is not required to report on cosmetic items

As you can see from the above, there are a lot of question that a prospective inspector can be asked relative to the inspection that will be performed. Inspectors do differ in their inspection philosophy and in how they interpret “cosmetic” and “safety” issues while still adhering to Arizona’s standards of practice for home inspection.

## Maintenance Item for Nov: **Termite Inspection**

(Each month, we select appropriate items so that over a 12 month period you are reminded to attend to most common household maintenance/inspection items.) Pest professionals recommend that Arizona homes be inspected for termites annually. If evidence of termite activity is found during the annual inspection, damage is generally not an issue. Many pest companies perform these inspection **for free** “in hopes” of finding and selling a termite treatment. **NOTE:** The monthly service that sprays your home for insects (not termites) is usually not inspecting for termites.

## Question of the Month: **What is meant by over fusing?**

There are many sizes of electrical wires (wire size is defined by American Wire Gauge or AWG). Thinner wires can carry less current than thicker wires. Too much current on too thin a wire will cause the wire to overheat. Circuit breakers are a safety device that shuts power to a circuit if current is higher than a wire’s rating. So, when inspectors see a 20 AMP breaker or fuse on a circuit wire designed for 15 AMP maximum, this is reported as over-fusing (which is a potential fire hazard).

## Safety Tip of the Month: **Carbon Monoxide Alarms**

The heating season is upon us. If you have gas heaters and appliances for the home, we recommend installing carbon monoxide monitors. These relatively inexpensive devices are about the size of smoke detectors and will detect this odorless, tasteless but **deadly** gas.

**Inspection class for realtors:** Arizona Academy of Real Estate (Bell and 99<sup>th</sup> Ave) offers a **3 credit hour course** “lowering risk through inspection”. This monthly course (Nov 15<sup>th</sup> from 9 to 12 noon) is taught by Mark Andrews (yours truly). Please contact the Academy for details. Ph# 623 505 5380

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Mark Andrews



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**H&A Services, LLC**

(480) 614-0015 (623) 561-1709

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